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Library Trustees Minutes 03-11-2003

Robbins Library Board of Trustees
March 11, 2003

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:38 PM. Attending were trustees David Castiglioni, Patricia Deal, Katharine Fennelly, Barbara Muldoon, Frank Murphy, Joyce Radochia and Susan Ruderman. Also attending were library director Maryellen Loud and assistant director Cynthia Diminture. The Board also welcomed the library's Finance Committee liaisons John Deyst and Mary Margaret Franclemont.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the February 18th meeting were approved with one correction (the word "than" was inserted between the words "larger" and "expected" in the third line of the FY04 Budget paragraph) on a motion by Ms. Fennelly; seconded by Ms. Muldoon.

Procedure for Review of Library Policies

Ms. Radochia asked for the creation of a sub-committee to review the policies. Ms. Fennelly agreed to serve with Frank Murphy. Ms. Loud will review policies with staff. Then she will confer with the sub-committee who will give a brief report at a future meeting.

Schedule of Exhibits by Public

As previously discussed, Ms. Loud distributed the schedule for the use of the public display table. Community groups have reserved seven of the next ten months.

Author Program

The author program sub-committee has scheduled the program for Tuesday, April 22nd at 7:30 PM. Three authors have agreed to speak: Gary Goshgarian, Jeffrey Carver and Craig Shaw Gardner. A moderator is still being sought.

Meeting with Finance Committee Liaisons

The library's Finance Committee liaisons, Mary Margaret Franclemont and John Deyst, reviewed with the trustee board how the budget process works. The liaisons have reviewed the submitted budget and then met with Ms. Loud to talk about the entire budget situation for the library. They recognize what a large percentage budget cut the library has sustained for FY04. The representatives answered questions and reiterated that the budget process is still very much in a state of flux. Much discussion took place about the possibility of the library being de-certified by the state, making it ineligible to receive direct state aid payments. This could also result in neighboring libraries' denying borrowing privileges to Arlington residents. Mr. Deyst talked about the possibility of Town Meeting passing two separate budgets, one dependent on a positive override vote and the other not. The Board of Selectmen will make a decision on March 24th about going forward with an override election.

Community Time

No members of the community were present. However, Ms. Fennelly brought up the topic of communications regarding the library which have been appearing on the Arlington list serve.

Friends of the Library Update

Ms. Fennelly and Ms. Diminture reported on the activities of the Friends of the Library. Proceeds from the ongoing book sale continue to increase. Additional shelves have been added to the sale room. The January Irish music program was well attended and enjoyable. The Friends will be sponsoring a three-session genealogy series in April. The programs will be free, but the Friends asked the Trustees for permission to accept donations, which was granted. The Friends hope to do a fundraiser with the Arlington Friends of the Drama in October. April is membership renewal month for the Friends.

Annual Report for the Public

The trustees liked the format of last year's report and would like Ms. Loud to do a similar one this year. They would like it to be distributed to Town Meeting members.

Disaster Planning Funds

Ms. Loud made the trustees aware that Nancy Gentile is preparing a thorough disaster plan. In the event of a real (and expensive) disaster, the library would most likely need some immediate funds. There was a consensus among the board members that trust funds could be used for this purpose.

Communications

Ms. Loud distributed a memo from David Gray of the MA Board of Library Commissioners containing an update on the state budget situation. The Massachusetts Library Association is trying to have a strong showing at the upcoming Library Legislative Day. Crossroads Trade, in cooperation with the town's recycling committee, is promoting awareness of Earth Day. They have asked the library to be a drop-off location for projects made from recycled materials created by students in grades one through eight. A discussion took place on a request by the group Arlington United for Justice with Peace for support of their warrant article regarding the Patriot Act. Neither the Board nor the director will be endorsing the article since it is not customary for either to take a position on warrant articles.

Fundraising

A suggestion was made to offer a fundraising option via the Robbins Library web site. Ms. Ruderman advised the creation of bookmarks soliciting donations. She will draft the text for the bookmarks as well as the letter for the annual business donor solicitation.

FY04 Budget

It was the sense of the trustees that some of the trust fund line items could be transferred to the materials category in the next fiscal year. Ms. Ruderman cautioned against losing all of the non-materials services, such as the author programs. Discussion took place about many aspects of the FY04 municipal budget as submitted. Some trustees will meet with the Acting Town Manager to talk about the budget in detail. The Finance Committee Liaisons will probably return to a future trustee meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 PM on a motion by Ms. Deal; seconded by Mr. Murphy. The next meeting will take place on April 8th at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Diminture